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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Parkinson names chair, vice-chair of Kansas Broadband Advisory Task Force**

*Brad Williams, Randall Allen to head advisory group,  
advance Connect Kansas broadband initiative*

TOPEKA — Governor Mark Parkinson has named Brad Williams and Randall Allen as chair and vice-chair, respectively, of the Kansas Broadband Advisory Task Force, a group of industry and policy leaders who will help develop the state's long-term broadband strategy.

Williams, of Lawrence, is the chief information officer for the Kansas Board of Regents, which governs six state universities and supervises and coordinates 19 community colleges, five technical colleges, six technical schools and a municipal university. He is also the executive director of Kan-ed, where he facilitates technology solutions for higher education institutions, libraries, hospitals and K-12 schools. Allen, of Topeka, is the executive director of the Kansas Association of Counties.

“We’re excited that Brad Williams and Randall Allen have accepted our invitation to lead the Kansas Broadband Advisory Task Force,” said Stanley Adams, broadband planning manager for the Kansas Department of Commerce. “Brad and Randall bring outstanding experience, leadership, and a passion for improving the lives of Kansans by leveraging broadband technologies, and we look forward to working with them to advance the Connect Kansas initiative in Kansas.”



Williams and Allen will retain their appointments for one year. Subsequently, the chair and vice chair will be elected by the task force members.

Created in July by [Executive Order 10-08](#), the Kansas Broadband Advisory Task Force will make recommendations for the development of a broadband strategy to support statewide availability and adoption of broadband services consistent with the 2010 National Broadband Plan. The task force will coordinate input from stakeholders in the public and private sectors in furtherance of economic growth in Kansas.

Connect Kansas is funded primarily by the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which has invested \$7.2 billion to help states expand broadband access to underserved communities. Launched in December 2009, Connect Kansas is 1) mapping the state's existing high-speed Internet availability and creating a strategy for broadband infrastructure improvements; and 2) helping Kansas organizations apply for federal awards to undertake broadband expansion and adoption projects. The Kansas mapping tool, Broadband Stat, is near completion and will be launched later this year. In total, 10 Kansas companies have been awarded more than \$185 million in Recovery Act grants and loans to expand broadband Internet infrastructure. For details, visit [www.connectkansas.org](http://www.connectkansas.org).

For more information, contact Joe Monaco, public information officer with the Kansas Department of Commerce, at (785) 296-3760 or [jmonaco@kansascommerce.com](mailto:jmonaco@kansascommerce.com).

## Member Biographies

Kansas Broadband Advisory Task Force members are as follows:

- **Brad Williams** (chair), a representative for education
- **Randall Allen** (vice-chair), a representative for Kansas counties
- **Stan Ahlerich**, a representative for economic development
- **Jay Allbaugh**, a representative for different broadband technology platforms
- **Joanne Budler**, a representative for libraries and public access
- **Steve Davis**, a representative for rural telecommunications consortia
- **Jennifer Findley**, a representative for health care
- **Jessica Frye**, a representative for public safety
- **Joe Hennes**, a representative for government public interface
- **J.D. Lester**, a representative for small cities
- **Guy McDonald**, a representative for regulatory affairs
- **David Rosenthal**, a representative for digital accessibility
- **Bill Roth**, a representative for inter-agency technology integration
- **Gabe Schlickau**, a representative for economic development
- **Cindy Swoboda**, a representative for different broadband technology platforms
- **Dan Yunk**, a representative for agriculture and rural development

### *Legislators*

- **Pat Apple** (R-Louisburg), Kansas Senate
- **Doug Gatewood** (D-Columbus), Kansas House of Representatives
- **Janis Lee** (D-Kensington), Kansas Senate
- **Tom Sloan** (R-Lawrence), Kansas House of Representatives

### *Cabinet-Level Agency Secretaries*

- **Josh Svaty**, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Agriculture
- **Bill Thornton**, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Commerce

**Brad Williams**, Lawrence, serves as the task force chair. He is the chief information officer for the Kansas Board of Regents, which governs six state universities and supervises and coordinates 19 community colleges, five technical colleges, six technical schools and a municipal university. He is also the executive director of Kan-ed, where he facilitates technology solutions for higher education institutions, libraries, hospitals and K-12 schools.

**Randall Allen**, Topeka, serves as the task force vice-chair. Randall is the executive director for the Kansas Association of Counties, a quasi-public agency that seeks to advance the public interest by promoting effective, responsive county government in Kansas. As executive director, Allen helps to uphold the association's mission of advancing public interest by providing representation, education and leadership to Kansas counties. Beyond his administrative duties, Allen works as an advocate and representative for the interests of counties located both within and outside the state.

**Stan Ahlerich**, Topeka, is the president of Kansas, Inc., a public-private partnership that conducts evaluation reviews and provides oversight of economic development programs to benchmark economic development efforts in Kansas. Ahlerich is also a past president of the Kansas Farm Bureau.

**Jay Allbaugh**, Wichita, is the vice president of governmental affairs at Cox Communications for the state of Kansas and a member of the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association.

**Joanne Budler**, Topeka, has been the Kansas State Librarian since January 2010. Previously, Budler was the Ohio State Librarian.

**Steve Davis**, Medicine Lodge, is the chair of the State Independent Telephone Association, which establishes partnerships between rural telephone companies and ensures quality telephone service throughout Kansas. He is also the president of SC Telcom, which provides telecommunication services to rural communities in South Central Kansas.

**Jennifer Findley**, Topeka, is the director of education at the Kansas Hospital Association, an organization of hospitals working together to improve access, quality and affordability of healthcare for Kansans. She is also a liaison to the Kansas Healthcare Education Council and the Kansas Association of Medical Staff Services. Additionally, Findley is a member of the Kan-ed User Advisory Council and the Kansas Digital Learning Advisory Board.

**Jessica Frye**, Topeka, serves as the geographic information system coordinator for the Kansas Adjutant General's Office. Frye also serves on the North Central Region Homeland Security Support Team.

**Joe Hennes**, Topeka, currently serves as chief information technology officer for the Executive Branch of Kansas State Government. In 2009, Hennes was named as director of the Division of Information Systems and Communications. He is also a member of the Kansas Partnership for Accessible Technology.

**J.D. Lester**, Chanute, is the city manager for Chanute. Before that, he worked as a city administrator for Hermann, Mo., and with a statewide Missouri organization representing member utilities for legislative and regulatory issues. Previously, he worked as the marketing and public relations director for a local utility company in Indiana.

**Guy McDonald**, Topeka, works as a senior telecommunications analyst for the Kansas Corporation Commission.

**David Rosenthal**, Topeka, serves as president of the Kansas Telecommunications Industry Association, an organization aimed to represent and advocate for the interests of telecommunication companies and the public they serve. Before joining KTIA, Rosenthal worked for Southwestern Bell for 17 years.

**Bill Roth**, Topeka, is the chief information technology architect for the State of Kansas and the secretary to the Information Technology Executive Council. Roth also serves as a member of the Kansas Partnership for Accessible Technologies where he helps to address Web and information technology accessibility issues and provides related policy, standards, guidelines and procedural recommendations.

**Gabe Schlickau**, Wichita, is an economic development manager at Black Hills Energy. Schlickau serves on the board of directors of the Kansas Economic Development Alliance and was a past president of the Western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance.

**Cindy Swoboda**, Topeka, is the manager of regulatory relations at AT&T, and is a member of CTIA-The Wireless Association, an international nonprofit membership organization representing the wireless communications industry.

**Dan Yunk**, Manhattan, is the chief executive officer of the Kansas Farm Bureau, a non-profit advocacy organization representing grassroots agriculture. Dan is a past superintendent of Manhattan-Ogden USD 383. Yunk received his bachelor's and master's in secondary education, as well as his doctorate in educational administration from Kansas State University.